

Ormesby seal WBL title on 25th anniversary

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Dot Macfarlane, Josie Ransome and Christine Lewis (all pictures courtesy of John Upham)

Despite inclement weather across the country, 160 players and supporters from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland converged on the Doncaster Dome for the final weekend of WBL's Silver Jubilee year. Special Guests, Alan and Jose Ransome, and Christine and Paul Lewis joined Barry Chapman and Ron Rowley (WBL equipment Sponsors Bribar) and Sarah Dixon, Corporate Sales Executive, The Dome (Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust), to celebrate this special weekend.

A group photograph with Jubilee Speech and crystal presentations had been arranged to recognise the achievements of Jose Ransome, Christine Lewis and her late husband Mike – three very special people whose contributions to the WBL were endless. The 'dream' of a top quality event for Women in Table Tennis was Jose's. However, it was Mike Lewis, as Vice Chairman Development who made the dream reality when in 1988 the WBL was launched under the ETTA Development banner.

Mike and Christine immediately became its voluntary Organisers and continued the partnership for the next 17 years ensuring its success and onward continuance. Special awards were also presented to Gill Smith – for exceptional voluntary services to the League, and to Rosemary Rainton for player dedication to the league for 23 of the 25 years.

Full cooperation of the whole WBL 'family' – players, team captains, supporters, sponsors and volunteers was again evident throughout the weekend – proof that 'team work' reigns supreme. The Organiser wishes to thank every member of the 'team' for such sterling commitment before, during and after the event. THANK YOU.



Ormesby: Maria Tsaptsinos, Karina Le Fevre, Chloe Whyte & Alan Ransome OBE (Coach)

Competition was fierce – Ormesby were not going to give up their Championship without a fight – and Karina Le Fevre made it quite clear that they were a force to be contended with – winning all 10 of this weekend's matches in three straight sets. Ormesby dropped only one point throughout the competition – to second place Draycott and Long Eaton I who pushed Burton Uxbridge into third position on games difference.



YHL team of Vicky Smith, Yolanda King and Rachel Trevorrow

The fight to gain promotion to the much coveted Premier Division saw the YHL team of Rachel Trevorrow, Victoria Smith and Yolanda King, all with 80%+ averages storm through Division 1 with maximum points. Again second place was decided on points difference with Knighton Park the victors despite Thornton's 4-2 last match win against Halton II and Marketa Myskova's 100% record 20 from 20.



Drumchapel's trio of Lucy Elliott, Lynda Flaws and Corinna Whitaker

Division 2 was only decided after the final match of the weekend where Drumchapel Glasgow Ladies and Fusion WAGS, both on equal points, met to decide the top placings.

A good start for Fusion WAGS took them to a 2-0 lead. The 'Drum' were beating no retreat though, and Lucy Elliott, Corinna Whitaker and Lynda Flaws took the next four, the required two points, and promotion to Division 1.

Formby took Division 3 in style – dropping only seven sets over both weekends. Pink Pong South West (with Player of the Weekend Naomi Jackson) took second place, eight points ahead of the remaining field.



Player of the Weekend Naomi Jackson with Jose Ransome

Going into the last round, newcomers to the WBL family, Sycamore, just needed the two points to kick Cardiff City Ladies into touch and second place in Division 4. Without key player, Amber Zygadlo who had a 70% record from the first weekend, Maria Lebedeva, Debbie Rider and Lisa Lewis found themselves 2-1 down before regaining their composure to take the next three to secure the two points and Sycamore's promotion to Division 3.

Newcomers Draycott East Midlands III had romped away with the Division 5 title, dropping only one point. Going into the final round however, two other newcomers, York Gardens Angels and Woodfield were sniffing at second place, with BATTS close on their heels.

With Woodfield's last match against the top of the division, their fate seemed to be in the hands of others as well as in their own performance. York Gardens Angels just needed a win against bottom of the division Halton IV, and BATTS were still in the chase.

The BATTS youngsters did well to take a point from the experienced Sutton at Hone ladies propelling them out of the relegation spot, but York Gardens Angels were cruising against Halton IV and taking second place from under their noses. Although their excellent performances and sportsmanship was rewarded when the BATTS youngsters were awarded Team of the Weekend.

Congratulations to all the winners and runners-up and the special award winners:

Team of the Weekend: BATTS

Player of the Weekend: Naomi Jackson (Pink Pong SW)

Solihull Trophy: (*A perpetual trophy awarded to an individual who has enhanced the Women's British League – voted by the teams*) – Liz May, Thorntons and Pink Pong SW



Christine Lewis and Liz May

Dot MacFarlane (February 19, 2014)

Thanks to [John Upham](#) for the photographs.

For a full results history please refer to the [British League Web Site](#).

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